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Daily Environment Report

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Leading the News

Climate Regulation

Will Pruitt Harpoon Climate Doubters' 'Great White Whale'?

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt has vowed to roll back Obama-era rules capping greenhouse gases from power plants and oil wells, but some conservative groups want him to go further and uproot the legal foundation for the agency's climate regulations.

News

Air Pollution

Connecticut Sues for EPA Power Plant Emissions Decision

A federal court should force the EPA to decide whether pollution from a Pennsylvania power plant is fouling air in Connecticut, the northeastern state said in a lawsuit filed May 16.

Air Pollution

Vietnam Air at 'Danger Point' Could Threaten Economic Revival

Vietnam is famously teeming with motorbikes that carry an air pollution double whammy: The

fumes they discharge are largely unregulated, and they're often breathed in by riders on packed city roads.

Chemical Security

GOP Optimism on Chemical Plant Resolution Fades With Challenges

The expiration of the Congressional Review Act clock before it could be used against the chemical security rule is a win for public health and labor groups, though the final outcome of the regulatory process is less clear.

Chemicals

3M, Carpet Industry Face Growing Alabama Water Suits

Stain-blocking chemicals used in carpet found their way into Alabama water supplies and are now the subject of lawsuits against dozens of carpet and chemical manufacturers.

Chemicals

California May Require Warnings for Some Atrazine Weedkillers

Herbicides containing atrazine and five related chemicals sold in California beginning July 1 may need to come with consumer warnings of potential developmental and reproductive harm.

Chemicals

Pace of EPA New Chemical Reviews Picks Up, Allaying Concerns

Chemical industry concerns that new compounds aren't being approved in a timely way are being allayed by newly posted EPA decisions.

Climate Regulation

EPA Tells Pennsylvania to Rework Coal Plant Permit

Pennsylvania must reconsider the permit it gave a coal-fired power plant that allowed it an additional three years to comply with federal standards for toxic pollutants after the EPA granted a request from the Sierra Club.

Climate Regulation

Effort to Rely on States for Climate Action Scores Win in Virginia

Climate action advocates who are looking to individual states for some good news given the Trump administration's rollbacks of climate efforts scored a victory May 16 with the Virginia governor's move to set carbon pollution limits for the power sector.

Corporate Responsibility

BHP Studying Shale Sale as Activist Fund Elliott Demands Review

BHP Billiton Ltd. is considering further sales of its U.S. shale gas assets as it fends off the second round of attack from activist hedge fund Elliott Management Corp. over the future of the energy business within the world's biggest mining company.

Corporate Responsibility

Conoco Shareholders Reject CEO Pay as Stock Underwhelms

ConocoPhillips shareholders voted against the CEO's pay package for the first time ever, even after his total compensation shrank.

Endangered Species

EU to Prohibit Elephant Tusk Exports, Closing Loophole

The European Commission May 16 revised its interpretation of European Union rules on the trade in ivory, with the effect that permission for exports of elephant tusks from the bloc will no longer be granted after July 1.

Energy

Coal's Next Demand Center Seen Eyeing U.S., Colombia for Imports

Southeast Asia, which is set to become one of the main importers of coal along with China and India, may turn to the U.S. and Colombia for supplies as power demand rises, according to the World Coal Association.

Energy

Free Up Higher Blend Ethanol for Summer Sale: Biofuel Groups

Biofuel supporters are prioritizing one regulatory change atop all others in the EPA's jurisdiction: Free up mid-level ethanol blends for year-round sale.

Energy

New South Korean President Seen Hindering Nuclear Ambitions

Playing on concerns about the safety of nuclear power in the wake of Japan's Fukushima disaster in 2011, South Korea's Moon Jae-in promised during his successful presidential campaign to scrap or suspend new atomic plants.

Energy

Scientist Turns Power Broker in Canada's Political 'Wild West'

Andrew Weaver is an unlikely power broker. His Green Party of British Columbia never had more than a single seat in the Canadian province's parliament, and it got its first campaign bus in this election.

Insurance

Insurer Off the Hook for Catfish Oil Recycler's Pollution

An insurer is off the hook for more than \$859,000 in environmental cleanup costs stemming from biofuel firm's recycling of catfish and other oils, the Southern District of Alabama ruled May 15 (Heartland Catfish Co. v. Navigators Specialty Ins. Co., 2017 BL 162466, S.D. Ala., No. 15-cv-00368, 5/15/17).

Mining

Canada Proposes More Stringent Limits on Mining Effluent

Canada proposes more stringent limits on releases in effluent by mining companies of arsenic, copper, cyanide, lead, nickel and zinc and—for the first time—a limit on ammonia.

Motor Vehicles

Glencore Says Electric Car Boom Is Coming Faster Than Expected

Glencore PLC Chief Executive Officer Ivan Glasenberg said the rise of electric cars will significantly boost demand for minerals including copper and lithium in the coming decades.

Oil & Gas

Anadarko, Noble Face Homeowner Suits After Lethal Gas Explosion

Anadarko Petroleum Corp. and Noble Energy Inc. could be facing nearly a dozen homeowner lawsuits following a fatal house explosion last month in Firestone, Colo., linked to a severed natural gas pipeline.

Oil & Gas

Spurned Shale Play's Getting Love as U.S. Gas Prices Rebound

A natural gas basin that helped kickstart the shale boom a decade ago is getting a new lease on life as the market recovers.

Pesticides

Judge Sides With Ex-EPA Employee in Monsanto Cancer Suit

A federal judge rejected an attempt by attorneys to pry more information out of a retired EPA scientist embroiled in a bitter battle between Monsanto Co. and thousands of cancer victims.

Pipeline Safety

Ohio Property Owners Sue to Stop 250-Mile Pipeline

More than 60 property owners are suing a gas company and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to halt construction of a 250-mile natural gas pipeline across Ohio and Michigan.

Regulatory Policy

Democrats Back Bill Repealing Congressional Review Act

Companion bills to repeal the Congressional Review Act and give agencies a way to reissue previously overturned rules were introduced May 16 by House and Senate Democrats.

Renewable Energy

Clean Energy Startups Facing Funding Challenges, Brookings Says

Clean-energy startups in the U.S. are having a harder time getting investments from venture capital sources, creating a need for other types of funding to spur innovation, according to the Brookings Institution.

Renewable Energy

Michigan Utility to Cut Carbon With More Renewables, Less Coal

DTE Energy Co., owner of Michigan's largest electric utility, plans to cut carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050 by adding renewable energy and closing coal-fired power plants.

Renewable Energy

Power Company Chief Sees Risk of Subsidy-Free Wind Cutting Investment

Clean energy costs are falling so fast, they might spook investors, according to Vattenfall AB Chief Executive Officer Magnus Hall.

Renewable Energy

Renewables Add Resiliency to Grid, Energy Groups Tell Perry

Renewable energy groups told the Energy Department that they make the energy sector more diverse, reliable and resilient in response to a department study underway about the U.S. electric system.

Renewable Energy

Scottish Offshore Wind May Get Lift After Bird Ruling

Scottish judges paved the way for as much as 10 billion pounds (\$13 billion) to be invested in offshore wind power by overturning a ruling that said projects may kill too many birds.

Renewable Energy

Solar Duties Would Imperil 260,000 U.S. Jobs, Trade Group Says

The largest U.S. solar trade group is opposing a request from a bankrupt U.S. panel producer for the Trump Administration to impose duties on cheap imports, a move that the Solar Energy Industries Association said would jeopardize 260,000 American jobs.

Renewable Energy

U.S. Solar Maker's Bid for Tariffs Opposed by Its Owner in China

A controversial push by bankrupt solar panel manufacturer Suniva Inc. for the U.S. to implement tariffs on cheap imported panels is drawing opposition from a key player: the company's majority owner in China.

Solid Waste

European Lawmakers Want to Stem 'Immoral and Unsustainable' Food Waste

The European Union and its member countries should do more to reduce the amount of food wasted in the bloc, according to a nonbinding resolution adopted by European Parliament lawmakers May 16.

BNA Insights

Climate Regulation

Practitioner Insights: California, Trump Prepare for Battle Over Fuel Efficiency Standards

By Timothy D. Cremin: California and the Trump administration are gearing up for a battle to repeal existing regulations that significantly increase vehicle fuel efficiency standards by 2025. This battle involves many of the central disputes in today's political environment: reducing government regulations, climate change, industry versus environmentalists, the extent of executive, legislative and judicial power and states' rights.

Regulatory Agenda

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